"The pottery industry is poorly developed, but rude, plain pots (ñéo) are occasionally made by the women. Since more food is broiled or roasted than boiled or steamed, a family rarely possesses more than one pot. [13]

The banks of rivers serve as the principal source of clay. It is dug out by the women with the digging stick and carried home in baskets. In making a pot, the lumps of clay are first mixed with water and with carbonized seeds of the motacú palm which constitute the temper. The resulting mixture is made into balls, from which coils for the sides of the pot are rolled out, and into disks, from which the base of the pot may be formed.

The base is molded, either out of a disk of clay (in case the bottom of the pot is to be rounded) or out of a small coil (in case it is to be more pointed). It is molded entirely with the fingers, and when finished is placed in a slight depression in the ground into which ashes have been put to serve as a cushion.

The rest of the pot is constructed by the coiling technique. After the base has been molded, the coils are rolled out one by one on a mat of motacú palm and applied in turn. In making a pot a woman works the coils of clay together with her fingers, on which she frequently spits. In addition, she employs the convex surface of a mussel shell called hitai to smooth out the clay. After one or two coils have been added to the base of the pot, it is generally left standing to dry for a day before others are added. In this way the pot does not lose shape by having too much weight at the top when the clay is wet.

Thus several days commonly elapse before a pot is complete. Once finished, it is left to dry in the shade for about 2 days before it is baked.

Pots are baked in the hot ashes of an open fire. As each section of a pot hardens, it is turned slightly so as to bake another. To maintain an even heat, sometimes a pot is covered with green boughs and chips while it is baking. Since the method of baking is very crude, pots are very fragile and must be handled with great care. They vary in size from about 5 to 10 inches in diameter at the top and from about 8 to 14 in height."

1: Holmberg--13 [3] (1941-42) 1950 Siriono
116, 415, 391

"Calabashes (yabóki) are prepared as drinking vessels in the following manner. A round hole about an inch in diameter is cut in the top of a gourd with the gouging tool. A small stick is then inserted, and the seeds are loosened and shaken out. The calabash is then washed on the inside and dried slowly in the fire, water being squirted on the outside from time to time to keep it from burning. Calabashes, though used primarily as drinking vessels, are also employed for making mead and for storing tobacco, feather ornaments, and animal teeth.

When calabashes are scarce, hollow sections of bamboo are sometimes used as drinking vessels, to store wild honey, and to make mead. They are simply cut to the length desired."

1: Holmberg--13 [4] (1941-42) 1950 Siriono
116, 415, 391

"Mortars (mbúa) are sometimes hollowed out of fallen logs that lie near camp, but sections of a log are never cut especially for this purpose; that is, a section of a log is not cut, set up, and hollowed out on the end for use as a mortar. To make a mortar, a hole is made in the side of a fallen trunk with fire, the charcoal being chipped out with a digging stick, which also serves as the pestle. Mortars are used principally for grinding corn for food and mead, and for grinding burned motacú seeds for temper for pots. They are never carried from camp to camp."

1: Holmberg--13 [5] (1941-42) 1950 Siriono
116, 415

"No spoons, plates, bowls, or bags are manufactured by the Siriono. Pots and baskets have already been described."

1: Holmberg--36 [4] (1941-42) 1950 Siriono
116, 264, 415

"Strictly speaking, the Siriono possess no eating utensils. A broken calabash may sometimes be used to scoop food from a pot or even to eat from, but such utensils as plates and spoons are not manufactured. Generally speaking, everyone participating in a meal eats from a common pot. Chunks of meat, pieces of manioc, and the like are picked out of the pot with the hands, but when the meal consists of gruel or a soup the food is generally scooped out of the pot by using half-shells of motacú fruits as spoons. Food is also sometimes distributed for consumption by pouring it out on leaves of patujú, a plant resembling the banana. The distribution of food rarely goes outside of the extended family. Within the extended family, however, the distribution of food does not follow any strict pattern. Each nuclear family cooks its own food and the head of the house usually gets the back of an animal; his first wife the two hind legs. Other parts of an animal are usually distributed without reference to status within the family."

1: Holmberg--37 [3] (1941-42) 1950 Siriono
116, 276, 415

"After the leaves of tobacco have become mature they are picked by the women and are slowly dried on a small mat, made from the heart leaves of the motacú palm, which is placed on supports over the fire. Once dried the leaves are powdered in the hands and the tobacco is ready for smoking. The supply of powdered tobacco is stored in a small calabash, which is topped with a piece of corncob."

1: Holmberg--38 [2] (1941-42) 1950 Siriono
116, 273, 415

"Calabashes are considered to be the most suitable type of vessel for fermenting native beer, although when there was a shortage of these vessels I observed that it was fermented in long sections of bamboo."

3: Métraux--113 [2] (no date) 1942 Siriono
116, 285, 415

"Basketry. —Siriono basketry lacked the elaborate techniques used by other tropical Indians and was woven in the same way as temporary baskets made by hunters to carry game home. Woven articles of palm leaves included mats and carrying baskets, the form of the latter depending on whether they were to be carried over the shoulders, on the back, or in the hand. Fire fans were woven of a single motacu leaf."

3: Métraux--113 [3] (no date) 1942 Siriono
116, 323, 415

"Pottery. —The Siriono made crude round or oval pots of clay tempered with crushed motacu kernels, which burned out when the vessels were fired leaving the clay porous. Calabashes (Crescentia cuyete) were used for drinking cups."

"The greater part of the Siriono household furniture consists of basket-work. This may be divided into two groups, viz. those which are more carefully made and designed for storing away minor articles at home, in the hut, and the kind that are for occasional service, such as carrying home gathered fruit, etc. The latter category are only a moment's work in the forest, and are thrown away as soon as emptied. [74] Palm-leaves --leaves of the motacu--would seem to be the only basket-making material. Baskets are made by both men and women, although the manufacture of certain types, e.g. the storing-baskets, is mainly the women's concern. Only two basket-techniques are represented among the Siriono, viz. checkerwork and twilled work. Basket types, too, are few in number.

In the huts, mats--parichi--are very common. They are used for sitting on, or occasionally as sleeping mats.

In the making of baskets the technique is at first the same as in the case of a mat, the only difference being that the points of the leaves are not interwoven. The woody leaf-stalk is not removed, as its presence in the weaving lends stability to the basket and makes the work easier. The inner woody leaf-stalk is however cut away when the basket has been built up roughly to its intended height, the remaining parts of the leaf-stalks are then folded together so as to form the border of the basket, whereupon, at the junction of the basket sides to be, the free leaves are woven into each other. Lastly, the leaf-points at the bottom are woven together. It is in consequence of this mode of co-

construction that at first sight the finished basket [75] appears to have been built up of two palm-leaves laid one on top of the other and then woven together.

In the smaller depository baskets, the leaf-points are woven into the basket sides so as to be put out of sight, and giving the basket a rectangular shape with a more or less circular border. Small and flattened baskets of this type are, inter alia, used as receptacles for down of which to make feather ornaments. In the larger depository baskets, at the bottom the leaf-points are woven together into a plait, visible both on the inside and outside of the basket. Hence this kind of basket is of a somewhat bulgy, oval shape. Smaller baskets constructed in the same way are flattened from the sides, [77] Baskets designed for carrying on the back are called inanku, or panáku, the other types inu, or takuru.

Fire-fans, tekua, are constructed in the same way as the mat. In the mats, the points of the leaves are woven together into a plait along one edge, while in the fire-fans this edging plait frequently occurs, though just as often the leaf-points are woven in and concealed in the weaving proper.

Carrying-baskets designed for permanent use are entirely absent."

4: Ryden--80 (1939) 1941 Siriono
116, 415

"For carrying water, the Casarabe Siriono Indians use calabashes. They are of rounded shape, with a small opening where the leaf-stalk has been. These water calabashes are kept separately in the hut, and from the place where the water is drawn they are carried in baskets of the type here described. [MPK: i.e., non-permanent leaf baskets]"

4: Ryden--80 [2] (1939) 1941 Siriono
116, 415

"The leaf-stalk in the basket in fig. 37 has the same shape as in the preceding instance [MPK: i.e., bent into a U-shaped framework]. On the rear side of the basket there is a fibre cord tied on to the two upright ends of the leaf-stalk. This constitutes the bearing band, and, in carrying, the basket is placed on the back with the bearing band resting against the forehead."

4: Ryden--81
116, 415

(1939) 1941

Siriono

Fig. 37. Back-borne carrying basket. 1/6.

4: Ryden--84 (1939) 1941 Siriono
116, 415

"The Indians of Casarabe use calabashes for carrying and storing water. The calabashes are usually spherical or oval, with a small opening at the place where it was attached to the stalk. As already mentioned, when containing water or other fluid they are kept in baskets or suspended in strings, fig. 41. The Siriono name for water-calabash is ía or rosakwari.

The Siriono do not know the method of mending a crack in a calabash by sewing it together and sealing it up with wax. Should a spherical calabash crack, it is instead remade into a bowl, yavoke. If a calabash of the oval shape develops a crack that runs from the mouth of the vessel down towards its base, both sides of the crack are cut away so as to stop it from widening, and in the result one has a bowl of the shape shown by the calabash on the left in fig. 40. In the case of a spherical calabash, on the other hand, it is trimmed down so that the base is left to serve as a bowl.

Small feather ornaments like those seen in figs. 56B and C [MPK: not reproduced for this file] are also stored away in calabashes provided with a stopper consisting of a shelled maize-cob."

Fig. 40. Calabash bowls. 1/6.

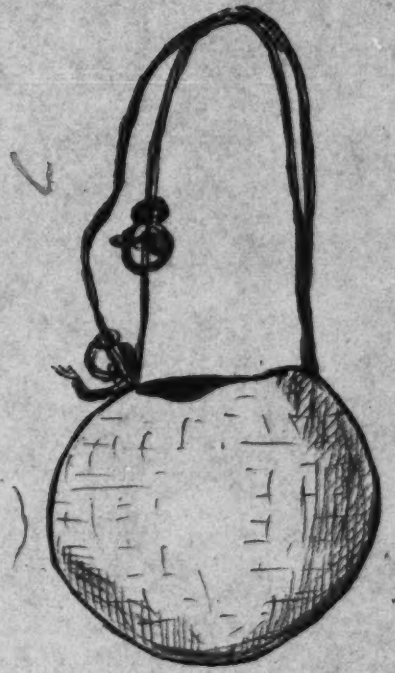

Fig. 41. Hanging calabash. 1/4.

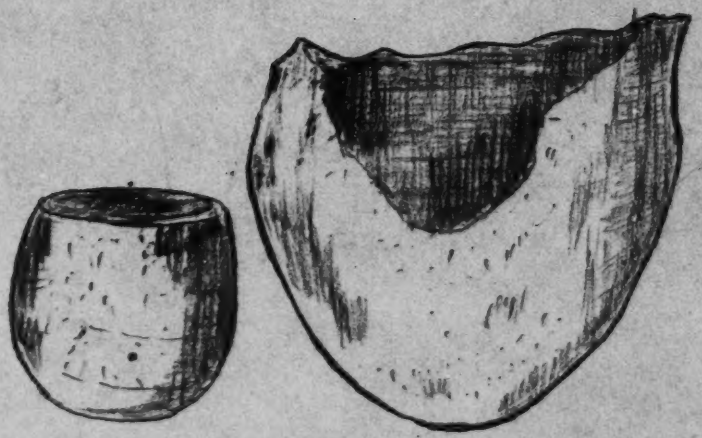

Fig. 44. Two Siriono pots. 1/6.

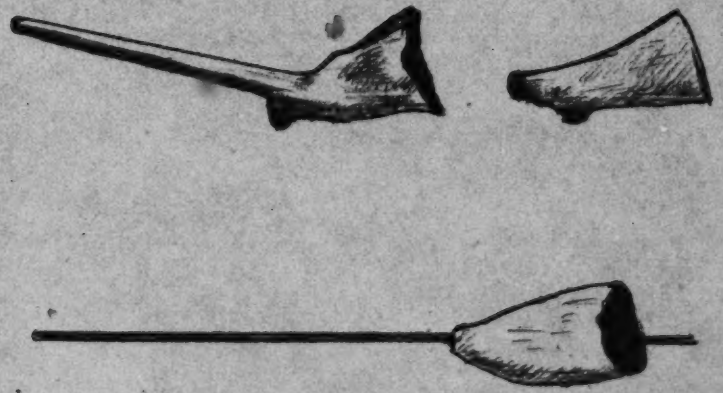

Fig. 46. Two tobacco-pipes and a partly finished pipe. 1/6.

4: Ryden--94-95 (1939) 1941 Siriono
116, 415, 252, 171

"When used in cooking, earthenware pots are placed direct on the fire, propped up with a firebrand or two, or with the ashes. The method of using special supports for propping up cooking vessels is unknown, and it seems strange that the Siriono have not adopted this culture element. While [95] excavating a mound near Casarabe I recovered a massive cylindrical support for cooking vessels of a type occurring in the Amazonas region (fig. 62E). This object was found very near the surface. Supports for earthenware vessels are today used by Movima and Cavina Indians in eastern Bolivia, but archaeological discoveries indicate their having been more widely diffused in ancient times (NORDENSKIÖLD 1924, p. 126, map 14). Among South American Indians, pottery is women's work, and one would think that if the Siriono lived side by side with the mound people in the same way as prior to the pacification they lived as neighbours of the whites, they ought by direct contact, or through the abduction of women, to have obtained a culture element of this kind. This however is not the case. This detail suggests immigration into the mound area of eastern Bolivia having taken place after the disappearance of that culture."

5:: Radwan--294 T-3 (1928?) 1928 Siriono
116, 286, 352, 415

The household utensils of the Sirionos are of the simplest sort. They consist of some black pots, hammocks, carrying baskets, woven pieces, and pipes. The hammocks of knotted ropes, serve as beds. Often, for lack of space, they are hung above one another. In some pictures, one can clearly recognize the weaving stick and the different types of carrying baskets.